

# Comic Cuts 2<sup>D</sup> AND LARKS

[No. 2,722.]

SAMMY AND THE SHRIMP ENTERTAIN THE MATES WITH A FUNNY 'TAIL'!

[AUGUST 28, 1943.]



1. The mates had some washing to do, so Salty ordered Sammy and the Shrimp to go and find some firewood.



2. So away they went with a spunk to help them. Then they saw the big kangaroo.



3. That gave them an idea. So Shrimp informed Salty he'd found a very big log.



4. "Too heavy for you to carry, eh?" barked Salty. And he went along with old Porky.



5. But the mates had an outside shock when that log rose up and hit them for six. Then they saw things.



6. They saw the kangaroo, anyway, and determined to give that animale a much-needed lesson in manners.



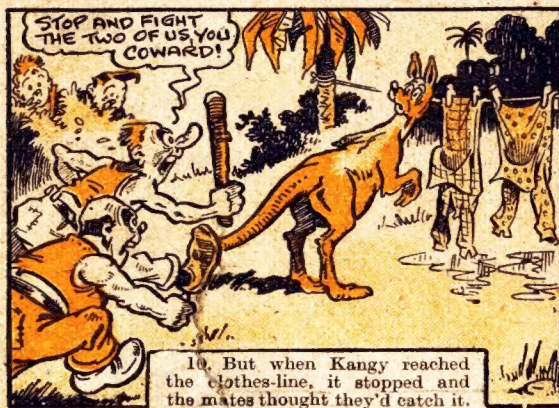
7. But the kids stopped that lark. They had stowed themselves in Kangy's pouch. So they slung a large coconut.



8. It caught Salty right in the neck, and he passed it on to Porky, peeving them both.



9. "We'll knock the stuffing out of that kangaroo, so we will," they roared, and chased after it.



10. But when Kangy reached the clothes-line, it stopped and the mates thought they'd catch it.



11. But Kangy was too fly for them. She dived into the shirts on the line and raced off!



12. Salty and Porky had to run after her to get them back, and the kids enjoyed a swing!



Our Merchant Navy chums in another thrilling adventure!

# Slanty in the Swamp!

Part Ashore!

THE 6,000-ton cargo-carrier, S. S. Chowdash, was bottled in dock at Miami, her Red Ensign drooping over the stern. The sun was dipping slowly into the Florida coast. "Slim" Connell, the lean, wiry fireman, was squatting on the fo'c's-head, busy with a favourite hobby, and every now and then gazing wistfully shoreward. Miami was a swell place, with its luxury hotels and clubs.

A high escaped Slim's lips, and he went on with his pipe now nearly completed. His was moving a belt by skilfully tying knots in white and black fishing-line to form a diamond pattern. Sometimes he sold such belts, but he was making this one to give away.

So engrossed was he in the hour of love that he scarcely noticed his bosom pal, Sam Smith, A.B., come forward, with "Slanty," the Chinese cook, at his heels.

"Hallo, Slim, you sea-slaid son-o-a-gun!" greeted Sam cheerfully. "We've got leave till eight o'clock to-morrow morning, so we'll be able to go on the spree again together and needn't hurry."

"Aye, you're right, Sam," said Slim, without looking up. "But you blokes go on ahead to Pinky's dance hall; I—I just want to finish this here belt."

"Right-ho! We'll see you there, matey."

Sam and Slanty went down the ladder to the well-deck, and the Chinaman paused.

"Me no 'tinks Slim will come to Pinky's dance hall," Slanty opined. "Me bet a dollar he make bet for 'niece dance-girl Sadie, and then he go snakes off himself to see her at High Life Cafe."

"It's a bet," Sam chuckled. "Old Slanty caught a bit miffed at that, but cussed him when he was here the High Life last night. But I know him a jolly sight better than you, cookie."

"Right-ho! That lean rascal of a bacon wouldn't have the bloom'n' nerve to try and make friends with a swell little high-stepper like Sadie Cheerill!"

Unseen by them, Slim was also wearing a smile, having overheard.

"So that's what Sam thinks o' me!" he mused. "I'll have the big laugh on him when he's lost his silly wage!"

Of course, Sadie, the acrobatic dancer, was "smiling" at him, and there was keen competition to dance with her after the floor-shows of the various clubs where she gave her turn. But Slim had never known a girl yet who failed to appreciate a beautiful hand-made belt such as the one he had nearly completed.

He watched his pals go ashore and disappear among the dockyard sheds. He vaguely imagined them on their way to Pinky's "joint," and why he didn't know was that they had found a hide-out and intended to watch where



At full throttle he charged the log, and the speed-boat leaped into the air!

he himself went, so that they might settle the little wage.

Having given them a few minutes' start, Slim put the neatly finished belt in his pocket and sauntered down the gangway with a cheery word to the duty quartermaster.

He strode out of the dockyard and up an almost deserted street that afforded a short cut to his destination. But he soon began to perspire in the moist, sultry air, and slackened his pace. Then, as he did so, a powerful car came purring round from a side street, followed him a little way and drew up ahead. Driving it was a stocky man, named Grogan, with whom Slim had had a drink on the previous night, and lounging in the rear seat was 'Rod Gilson, a well-to-do gentleman whom he believed to be Grogan's employer.

Gilson opened the door and beckoned him.

"You would like a lift, my friend?" he murmured. "Where would you like to be dropped? Delighted to be of any service to a member of the British Navy."

Only too glad of the chance, Slim said he would go to the house of a friend and get in beside his benefactor. And what made him hurry was a glimpse of Sam and Slanty peering round a corner.

"Drive to the café, Grogan," Rod Gilson ordered. "It is on our way."

Slim settled himself comfortably. The car drove on, turned a corner, and two streets along and gathered speed.

"Here! Where are you going, mate?" exclaimed Slim. "This isn't the way to the High Life!"

Then he sat back with a start on feeling a hard object pressed against his side. It was a small automatic pistol, fitted with a silencer, held by Gilson.

"Slide lower, my friend," rasped Gilson; "it is desirable that you should not be seen. Behave yourself and you will come to no serious harm; make any trouble and well, it will be just too bad for you."

"Great c-fishin'!" Slim choked. "Are you crazy? What's the big idea o' this stick-up?"

"I am anxious for your charming company this evening," said Gilson, remarking that you were pointed out to me by the faithful Grogan as a suitable man for my purpose. I merely wish to ask you some questions, but it is best to go to a quiet place where we can talk without interference."

Under Grogan's skilled control, the car sped through the outskirts of Miami and through the weird countryside beyond.

## The Rescue.

SAM SMITH and Slanty the cook Slim got up into the motor-car, and envied him the ride, for they themselves were hot and perspiring. "I don't like to go to the High Life," grunted Sam, "but I'm still sure he hasn't the nerve to go ashore after

Sadie Cheerill. Begosh, I'd like to know where he's bound for!"

"Nice High Life Cafe," insisted Slanty. "Look, mate, Sam—fast come along. We take ride, too."

By mere chance, a taxicab, driven by a negro called Rastus, who had driven them back to the docks on the night before, came empty along the street. The chums hailed it and jumped inside.

"Follow that car just turning the corner, Rastus," ordered Sam. "Okay, massa," the darky said. "Dis be good quick call for sure!"

The taxicab was modern and fast, and Rastus was a cheerfully reckless driver. It spun round the first of the two wheels and sped on through the town.

A cloud of dust marked the progress of the motor-car. The taxi bowed along a road that skirted part of one of the queerest areas in the world—the shallow Everglades. This is a monstrous lake in southern Florida with thousands of little islands, and the home of many alligators. Saw-grass and cypress grow among the swamp, and it is bordered by sinister mangrove thickets.

After some time Rastus brought the cab to a halt after seeing this motor-car turn off down a narrow track to the left.

"Sure, dat am one ob Massa Gilson's cars," he said. "He house am rough de trees. Yo' give me fifty dollars, please."

"Black robber!" gasped Sam. "Why, you black robber! That's not what it says on the clock."

After some arguing, Rastus agreed to take twenty-five dollars for "there and back" but said he wouldn't wait unless he got fifteen dollars on account. So Sam and Slanty got out of the car and went off on foot to take a look at the house whose roof they could see between the trees.

The sky was becoming purple in the dusk and weird cries and sucking noises sounded from the great swamp—and Rastus' croakings were heard from all sides of this weird place, promptly drove off back to town directly his passengers were paid.

Sam and Slanty heard the taxicab and muttered abuse.

"Well, I've won my wager, anyway. Slanty's bet had the house was damned sure Slim hadn't the neck to go chasing after that gel Sadie."

Suddenly their anxiety deepened again, for they heard one short, stifled cry in the unmistakable voice of Slim.

They approached the house near the edge of the swamp with a strange glow, but could see no one. They moved slowly round the house itself, and Sam forced a window and quietly opened it.

Sam was intending to get inside. A moment later he and Slanty bobbed down, for the door of the room opened and a man in his livery came out and tied behind him, followed by Gilson, with a pistol, and the man Grogan.

"Sit in the chair, Connell," said Grogan, and he heard him utter an obligation by telling me all about the Chowdash, precisely how her cargo is stowed, the position of the sea-cocks, and the high seas. Emboss offers are to go aboard. Also I would like to know the sailing date and time of departure."

"You're wasting your time," rasped Slim. "You'll get nothin' out o' me, you dimwit!"

Sam and Slanty peered gingerly above the window-sill. They saw Gilson stoop over Slim in the chair.

"Later," said Grogan, "I will put on your clothes. Connell," the crook remarked. "My plans are always elastic, and perhaps I can get someone of your build smuggled aboard the Chowdash at night. Sometimes, my friend, it is easier to destroy a ship in port than to radio smugglers to the open sea."

But there is no reason for you to come to harm; indeed, you should be glad you will be well out of the way, and there will be payment for you when I can let you go free—that is, if you will give the information."

Slanty got up furiously, but Grogan shoved him back and knotted a rope round him and the chair to hold him fast. "You're a good fellow," grunted Slanty, who nodded and alighted away silently round the house. Neither of the

pals was armed, and they realised they had a pair of dangerous customers to deal with. The luckless Slim must be possessed of some sort of accomplice by force they might be able to do by a trick.

So Slanty went round the house in the eerie gloaming, and suddenly set up a loud knocking on the door. That startled Gilson and Grogan, and the Chinaman came into the room. Gilson paused uncertainly until Slim, who had moved quietly away, showed a piece of rock through one of the windows.

"The crook took one glance at Slim tied in the chair, aware under his broad-brimmed hat that he was in contact Grogan, who had opened the front door and found no one there. And immediately he dashed out and the alighted inside and cut Slim free from his bonds."

"Come on!" gasped Sam. "We've got to flee!"

They scrambled out of the window and Slanty joined them, but there was a second dash for it up the room to the roof. The crooks were now out in the open, and Grogan gave a yell:

"There's a swell and—heck, a couple more!"

The three shipmates went the other way at speed, following a winding track through the mangrove swamp, armed with a pistol, in pursuit of them. There was no turning aside. The track led through a narrow path, and a croak, which was a deadly trap in itself.

Suddenly they came to an open glade and saw some sheds and landing-stages, and a few boats in the pond, which was a red, blue and green moored alongside.

"Boats!" grinned Sam. "This is a bit of all right, mates!"

They selected a red speed-boat that had ample petrol, and started up the canal, and they saw the crooks on the landing-stage with a tuneless roar that brought the furious crooks running along the shore.

Rod Gilson fired wildly in his rage. Features of his life in the remote house had been a mystery to several people, and now, on the edge of the swamp, he saw the danger of his secret becoming public. Under the threat of a show-down, he and Grogan became desperate men.

"Begosh! Open out, Sam, old salt!" peeped Slanty. "The crooks are pinchin' a boat to come after us!"

The moon and stars, shining from a violet sky, dappled the shallow waters of the swamp with silvery light between the dark islets with their trees and trailing creepers. The red speed-boat raced ahead, and green boats came in hot pursuit, throwing the spray like cascades of diamonds.

Following a mad chase through the weird Everglades, with the two boats swerving at speed between the islets and mangrove thickets. A narrow race it was, for the boats were crowded at the helm, saw with dismay that a moss-covered log barred the channel. Bets on Slim's boat were made, and the foam astern, and he knew that he dared not stop—nor, indeed, could he so in time to avoid the obstacle ahead. The boat was stopped, and the light and the uplifted bow of this speed-boat whipped over it. The boat leaped into the air, dropped with a mighty splash on the far side and sped onward.

But the craft that Grogan was steering was not so lucky. It was caught in the heavy sand, and the boat crashed and fell into the log, sending the two rogues spinning into the foaming mounds.

"Look-see!" Dirty spies got downwind!" whooped Slanty gleefully. "The crooks are in a bad way, but back, and he and Slim dragged the half-drowned crooks from the water."

After much voyaging in the weird swamp, the boat turned back within easy distance of Miami and marched the baffled traitors to the nearest point of the coast, where the whole real names were Carl Humann and Marke, received sentences of ten years' imprisonment for various traitorous activities.

(There'll be a "Pension story of the tank Jumbo in Friday week's grand number.")

## DELAYED ACTION!



"Does the giraffe have a sore throat if it gets its feet stuck in some jammer, but not until the following week."

# Kenton Steel

## THE RUBBER CLUE!

### The Man in the Road.

"LOOK out!"

Kenton Steel's young assistant, Nutty Brown, suddenly blurted out the words and sat bolt upright in his seat. But the detective at the wheel of the car beside him, did not need the warning.

He, too, had sighted the object lying ahead in the grass a short distance ahead as they swung round a bend. It was a man, and Steel pulled to a halt alongside the motionless figure and dropped down beside it.

He saw that the man was somewhere about sixty, with short-cropped, grey hair. He was well dressed in good quality clothes suitable for the countryside.

"Been knocked down by a car, by the look of it," suggested Nutty as he joined his chief.

Steel did not reply, but continued to make an examination of the stranger. There was one sign of injury, and one only, and that was on the back of the head.

"Maybe you're right, Nutty," said Steel at last, "but it's equally possible that he has been struck down by a blow from behind with some heavy weapon would cause just such a wound as that. Ah! He's opening his eyes now. Good enough. Perhaps he'll be able to tell us himself what happened."

First Steel and Nutty lifted the helpless man to the grass verge at the side of the road, out of the way of any other car that might come swooping round the bend. After a few minutes he had sufficiently recovered to be able to speak.

His name, he told them, was Norman, and he lived at Grey Elm, a big house farther along the road. He had walked over to see an old friend of his living a mile and a half away, and had stayed to tea.

"I was on my way back home," he continued, "when suddenly, without the slightest warning, I felt a violent blow on the head. I heard nobody and saw nobody. Everything went black, and that's all I remember till now."

Steel and Nutty were puzzled. Steel, at a thoughtful frown. His suspicion that Mr. Norman had been struck down by human agency and not by a passing car was beginning to deepen.

He looked around. It was a very lonely spot, with not a single house or barn in sight. Close by was a big tree with a very broad trunk. After staring at it for some time Steel suddenly went close to it.

He peered intently at the ground. On the side farthest from the road the soil was dark and Steel plainly saw marks of boots, evidently quite recently made.

"It certainly looks as though somebody was standing behind this tree, waiting for his murdered man. Perhaps a tramp or a me-e-d-d-well, waiting to attack and rob the first passer-by."

"He seemed to me to be a man," Norman was just being assisted to his feet by Nutty. Visibly quivering, and obviously still shaky, the gentleman rose to his feet, wiping his brow, and then groped in the inside pocket of his jacket.

His jaw dropped, and he gave a quick look at Steel.

"My wallet!" he exclaimed, "It—it's gone! I—I had close on a hundred pounds in it!"

"Then, you must have been attacked and robbed by someone who was lurking behind that big tree," said Steel, looking at his footie, quite plain and clear cut, with rubber heels of different design from each other."

"I seemed to be gaining what Steel said, and as there was nothing useful to be done there, he and Nutty saw no harm in departing Mr. Norman to his house. All three squeezed into the car and they drove off.

It was very far from Mr. Norman's sudden touch on Steel's arm, and pointed to some big gates. Reaching there, the detective swung the car

through to the carriage drive, past a small lodge, and finally pulled up at the house itself.

Arrived there, the victim of the attack was given necessary treatment. Then, when he was more composed, Steel was able to ask him a few questions, after informing him who he was.

There was nothing Mr. Norman could tell the detective, however, that was of any assistance in solving the mystery of who had attacked him in the lonely road.

Mr. Norman lived with his wife in quiet retirement, he said. The lady was not at home that day, for which he was thankful, as he did not wish to alarm her unduly.

"My head will heal sooner or later," he declared, forcing a smile, "and the money I've lost is not exactly fortune."

"But to you, perhaps, but it might be to the person who robbed you," retorted Steel. "He must have been agreeably surprised when he saw such a

lot of money in your wallet—unless, of course, it was already aware that you were a detective."

"But how could he be?" said Norman. "Only if he happened to know you, and that you were carrying it this evening. I haven't seen you for a long time."

"Yes, Harker, the old lodge-keeper, is away this week, but his nephew, Fred Naylor, is replacing him till he comes back," was the reply.

"I see," nodded Steel. "I think I'll stroll down to the lodge and have a chat with Naylor, in case he's seen any suspicious stranger about and could give me a description. It would be something to be going on."

With that he left the house and walked down the drive to the lodge by the side of the road. He had a long talk with Naylor, in case he's seen any suspicious stranger about and could give me a description. It would be something to be going on."

"Good-afternoon," began Steel, and then abruptly his manner changed.

His smile of greeting disappeared, and he stared hard at the soles of the seated man's boots. Naylor was eying him uneasily, with an increasing curiosity.

"You're Naylor, aren't you?" suddenly asked Steel.

"Yes, that's right," the other agreed.

"Have you been out at all this afternoon?" Steel went on.

"No, I haven't left the lodge since this morning," replied Naylor, after a little hesitation. "Might I ask who you are, why you are questioning me?"

"I'm a detective," said Steel, "and I'm investigating an attack that was made upon Mr. Norman this afternoon when he was returning from a visit to a friend. He was struck down and robbed of a considerable sum of money."

"I've never," Naylor said, "seen any suspicious characters about."

"No, I can't say I have," replied Naylor. "I don't know the first thing about this, and this is news to me—surprising news. Is Mr. Norman badly hurt?"

"Come up to the house and see for yourself," replied Steel curtly.

Naylor gave him another quick, curious look. Then, with a few mumbled words, he accompanied the detective in silence up the carriage drive.

### A Desperate Chase!

"HERB'S Naylor," announced Steel, as they entered the room where Nutty was with Mr. Norman.

"I've brought him along so that he can see for himself how badly hurt you are. It is possibly a matter of some concern for him."

Naylor's eyes dilated for a moment, but he quickly recovered and turned to his employer.

"I want to hear about this, sir," he said. "What happened?"

"Mr. Norman was struck down and robbed of a considerable sum of money behind a tree near the bend in the road yonder," broke in Steel. "It's funny that the microscope should have been waiting there for Mr. Norman to pass, unless he was aware that he had a large sum of money on him, worth the risk of coming across a robber."

And, to my mind, Naylor, it's funnier still that the man should have been wearing those very boots you've got on now."

"These—these boots?" stammered Naylor, going a vivid crimson and staring at his feet.

"What do you mean? I don't understand!"

"Then I'll explain," went on Steel. "My boots have rubber heels of distinct patterns, both different. And they're identical with every plain foot-print left in the soft earth behind that big tree just mentioned. If you care to come along with me now you can see and compare them for yourself!"

"I'll go with you," Naylor said, "but I don't want to go to the lodge and see the man who was attacked. I'll go with you to the house and see the man who was attacked."

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"I know, but he won't get far," was the grinning reply. "The petrol's down nearly to the last drop. I need it when we arrived."

With that knowledge to spur them on, the two men started off. A male was covered, and then they came in sight of the car. It was empty, Naylor had abandoned it, finding it was no longer any use to him.

"Where can he have gone?" gasped Naylor, as they pulled up and looked around.

They saw the railway station in the distance, and Steel's eyes gleamed.

"Ten to one he'll make for the station and try to get away by train," he said. "I'll go on there. You stay here with the car."

With that he sped on towards the railway station. But before he reached it a train had come in, and he arrived in time to see the tail end of it as it departed again.

He inquired of the ticket collector and was told that a few minutes before a train had been passing by. Naylor had boarded the train, an electric one, due to make two stops before reaching the station.

Steel thought rapidly. Whither was the runaway bound? He might be going the long journey, or he might get out at one of the intermediate stops.

"And, equally likely," mused Steel, "being a desperate man, he might even jump out of the train while it was on the move, if he was going too fast."

What a pity I missed it!

He decided the best thing to do now was to give a description of Naylor and have it wired to the two stopping stations and the terminus, so that a look-out could be kept.

And then, as he was carrying out this plan he saw a car coming along, empty save for the driver. Haunting it, he quickly explained what he wanted, and the driver readily fell in with his wishes.

"Thanks very much," said Steel, jumping into the car. "With luck we'll get to the first stop before the train does. Then I can board the train and get my man, if he's still on it."

That was Steel's plan, but it was fated not to be carried out. For, after a while, the car, running on a road alongside the track, caught up with the train they were pursuing, stopped by a signal at a station.

"Gee, what an unexpected bit of luck!" gurgled Steel. "I needn't trouble you any further."

Tossing the driver a generous tip, he got out of the car, scrambled over the fence and reached the end of the train just as it got on the move. He pulled himself up, grasped a door handle and turned it, only to find it was locked.

"The door is locked, but Steel was not to be deterred now. Hanging on grimly as the train quickly gathered speed, he pulled himself up to the roof and made his way along it, working across to the opposite side."

And, as he reached it, two things happened. The train applied its brakes again on hearing another signal again; and the speed slackened a carriage door was flung open and a man dropped on to the track.

It was Naylor. The detective recognised him at once, and saw the man roll over a couple of times after hitting the ground. Then he began to get up, and as he did so he turned his head, and his face fell at what he saw.

Kenton Steel was leaping down from the train full at him. He handed right and left, and the pair were

the dusty to the door where Naylor's car was. Steel's paw handed him, and he was

And as he saw the approach of the train, he was

While in getting in, he saw

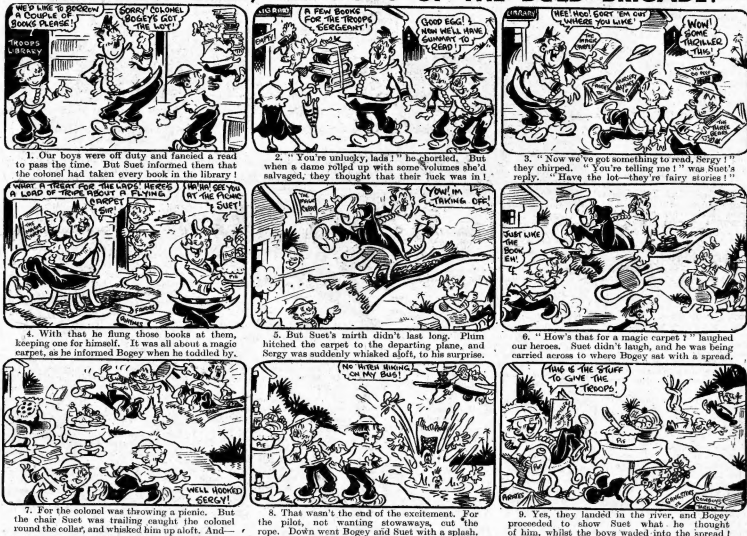
Naylor's stolen money

(Our money strange my



\*The customer was an old twister, and while our wily waiter was making out his bill, he tried to make off with the cutlery. But Waddles stopped his gallop.

## PLUM AND DUFF, THE BOYS OF THE BOLD BRIGADE!



1. We were spending a nice quiet holiday at home until old Len, looked in and stumbled upon our grub hamper. "I must look into this!" she cried.

2. But just at that very tick, Marcus raced up to give me a push off on the swing. He ran past himself, however, and cannoned ynto nosy old Len.

3. Cool! She was annoyed at getting in our blanchmange. "You push off!" she said, suiting the action to the word. "I want

**THE LITTLE BROWN**  
I'M GONNA GET YOU!

**THE LITTLE BROWN**  
I'M GONNA GET YOU!

**THE LITTLE BROWN**  
I'M GONNA GET YOU!

**THE LITTLE BROWN**  
I'M GONNA GET YOU!

WHAT A TREAT FOR THE LADS! HERE'S A LOAD OF TRAP ABOUT A FLYING CARPET

HA HA, SEE YOU AT THE PICTURE

YOU'VE TAKEN OFF!

Panel 1: Bart Simpson is swinging on a vine high above the ground. A speech bubble from him says: "Golly! It's something good to be in the BLANCHARD! WHERE DOES?"

Panel 2: Marge Simpson is on the ground, looking up and searching. A speech bubble from her says: "HEEN! MISSED!"

Panel 3: Bart is launched into the air by a spring mechanism. A speech bubble from him says: "Golly! It's something good to be in the BLANCHARD! WHERE DOES?"

Panel 4: Marge is on the ground, looking up and searching. A speech bubble from her says: "HEEN! MISSED!"

1. We were spending a nice quiet holiday at home until old Lena looked in and stumbled upon our crab hamper. "I must look into this!" she cried.

ANY COMPLAINTS? YES, SIR! THE SE WILLY TROUBLEDS

THEY BECOMING OF A CROWDED CHINEE? YEAH, SIR!

HOW COME? STANDIN' ROOMS ONLY!

Penny was examining bags for stolen property when an artful cove sprang a surprise on him. So he came to grin with his false whiskers and got his man

HEY! THIS SEAT IS RESERVED FOR...  
SOMEONE IS GOING TO GET A DUCKING...  
YOU'VE IT, MATE.

Panel 1: Snoopy sits on his doghouse, holding a typewriter. Woodstock flies nearby. The text above Snoopy says: "COME ON, TOY WRITERS!"

Panel 2: Snoopy types furiously. The text above him says: "BY THE TIME I GUESS GET OUT OF HERE, MOST OF THEM WILL BE POLISHED OFF THIS LOT!"

Panel 3: Snoopy looks up, startled. The text above him says: "THAT'S IT!"

Panel 4: Snoopy looks down at his typewriter, which is now empty. The text above him says: "THAT'S IT!"

Then, calmly parking herself on the seat, she ena-  
med me to do the pushing. But in falling, I had  
a frisky goat, and after putting it across me—



And  
Penny

Yes, Sir!  
These are my  
TROUSERS

Yes, Sir!  
These are my  
TROUSERS

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These are my  
TROUSERS

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Yes, Sir!  
These are my  
TROUSERS



Penny was examining tags for stolen property when an artful cove sprang a surprise on him. So he came to grips with his false whiskers, and got his man.

## BIG BEN AND LITTLE LEN, THE LARKY LADS!



1. Len was flying his kite in the park when his big brother gave him a job. "Tell Flossie I've reserved her seat by the lake," he chortled.



4. "Here, I say!" snorted Ben in great annoyance. "I'm not standing for you sitting there! That portion of park seat is reserved for a lady!"



7. No, he pushed the empty seat right into the lake, and disappeared with it. Just then, along came Len with Flossie, and he was kerfuffled.



2. Off whizzed Len, and Ben spread himself out. But a large-sized work-dodger drifted up and he perked himself on that seat, beside Ben.



5. "Then you can shift off and make room for her!" tootled the tramp. This was more than could stand. "I'll shift you!" he snorted.



8. For he expected to see Ben. However, next moment he saw him all right. For Ben popped up, clinging to the seat. And that suited Flossie.



3. That was bad enough, but to make matters worse the workaholic proceeded to undo the packet of rations, clumping Ben on the ear as he did so.



6. Saying which, he grabbed the seat and gave it a push. But the tramp grasped the branch of the tree and saved himself. Ben wasn't so lucky.



9. She was wearing her bathing costume. So all she had to do was to dive in and join Ben on the seat. So everything ended quite happily!



6. Then, calmly parking himself on the seat, Len ordered me to do the pushing. But in falling, I had upset a frisky goat, and after putting it across me—

5. It went charging on and delivered an attack in the rear on old Len. Properly swung it across her in fact, and sent the swing whizzing merrily round.



9. The limb of the tree up aloft. "He, ha! Old Len's wound up now, Marcus? I laughed. So we got off with our picnic. —MARTIN. —28-8-43

# ROVER JOE

## Shot by a Phantom!

ROVER JOE, peacefully crossing the great Desert Valley of Texas, suddenly stiffened on old Sleepy's back as a rifle-shot rang among the hills rising ahead.

"Oh, ho," murmured Joe. "Sleepy, that was a real old-fashioned Sharps buffalo-rifle that went off bang—and there ain't no hunting in this part of Texas! Who's buffaloing who now?"

Gravely and leisurely Rover Joe studied the tumbled wall of hills, for no veteran Westerner ever turned deaf ear or blind eye to a shot, harmless or not.

And in those Texas hills nothing stirred. It was only in the bright afternoon sky that first one black dot, then another and a third came swooping earthwards like falling stars.

"Buzards!" growled Joe. "Trust those scrawny scavengers to spot any chance of a meal! Sleepy, something's been shot and hit up there, or the buzzards wouldn't be gathering. Bust a frog! Look you!"

Excitedly he stared westward along the line of hills to where a faint cloud of dust rose above the ranks of chaparral. It was the dust kicked up by a galloping horse.

"That cinches it, old 'un!" Joe snapped. "I thought maybe some feller might 'a' shot a stray bear or Mexican lion with that buffalo-gun. But a guy don't let fly at an animal and then ride hell-for-leather the other way! Sure as yore's born there's a man been shot and yonder! Now the skunk who shot him is beating quick!"

And Rover Joe's scoutcraft was only too correct!

Fifteen minutes later, Sleepy carried his boss up into a shallow ravine among the hills, where a man lay sprawled and limp.

And to Joe's added horror a pretty girl, with ashen face, was bending over the man, feverishly trying to staunch the wound in his chest.

"He's been hurt badly," she said, her face white as paper. "I must hurry to get him to the doctor."

Sleepy's fierce roar scattered the buzzards, and Joe's swift examination told him the man still lived. He was unconscious, though, and badly hurt. The buffalo-bullet had only just missed a vital spot.

"I'm Rover Joe, missy," jerked the little adventurer, getting busy. "Who are you, and who is this poor gent? Had manners to ask questions, I know. But I heard the shot and came a-foggin'!"

"I'm Beryl Hardy," faltered the girl. "That's my daddy—Sheriff George Hardy, of Deepdown. Oh, I knew this would happen some day! I knew they would shoot him—the first chance!"

"They?" Joe looked up quickly from his first-aid. "Who's they, my dear?"

"The—The Phantoms!" whispered Beryl fearfully. "That's what our people call the gang. They're robbers, rustlers, killers. Oh, I don't know what. All we do know is they're a terrible gang, with clever spies even in our own town!"

"I'm sure interested, Miss Beryl; tell me more," he said quietly. "But first, is there any friend there close handy where I can take yore dad?"

Beryl pointed over the hills. "Buck Talbot's his own name," she breathed. "Buck is daddy's oldest friend, a trapper! We were on our way to see him! It was just a quiet pleasure-trip. I never told my friends and even knew we were going this way!"

"Somebody knew it, though!" Joe replied sharply. "But he was on guard until they arrived at Trapper Talbot's cabin, with the sheriff of Deepdown carried carefully on Sleepy's back."

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Then he stood staring and frowning as if struck by a sudden thought.

"Seems like this morning went on the floor needs the drink more than I do," he remarked quietly—and poured what was left in the glass on the bully-boy's face.

And after that Rover Joe started serenely to the street again—only to find his way barred.

"Hey, you! What's your game?" rasped a tall hard-faced man. "You can't knock me and friends and customers about like Aagh!"

Magically swift, Rover Joe had flicked out his gut at the man and the saloon-keeper—for such he was—doubled up with a gasp as Joe poked him hard in the midriff. The man's face yellowed; he collapsed to his knees. Before another hand could be raised against him Joe fired one warning shot into the floor, then vanished.

There was real uproar in the Lone Indian then. Men crowded round to pick up the prostrate "Bull" Snagsby. Others laughed outright at the cool cheek and speed of the mysterious little stranger.

But Luke Fairing, the saloon-owner,

streaked for their own guts and med them.

Bar-bit already by Rover Joe's own ambush, the dreaded Phantoms were shot down, fighting or fleeing. Some fought their last fight, others went under, wounded.

And presently torches gleamed as the black-eyed gold-guardians examined the fallen.

"Jumpin' Peter, look here!" gasped the deputy-sheriff. "This Phantom is also Fairing!" The boy—Luke—said. And this here's that roarin' bully-boy, Snagsby.

And serve 'em 'em both right!" drawled Rover Joe, blowing smoke from hot guns. "Snagsby shouldn't 'a' shoved me so rudely! And Fairing shouldn't 'a' shoved me so rudely! I ought to bump me off, 'cos my old Sleepy can snuff a slinkin' Greaser a mile away!"

"Come back to your gold safe is safe! I guess you've busted 't' Phantom gang and its leaders for good and all this night!"

"Old-timer, you're an ace!" breathed Deputy-sheriff Ashley. "But how did you, a stranger, manage to get wind of the Phantoms so quickly? You saw 'em out this ambush they'd laid!"

Rover Joe smiled. "Come back to the Lone Indian saloon, boys, and I'll show you!" he replied.

It was two in the morning, but Luke Fairing's saloon was still open, and George, the fat barkeeper, was still twirling glasses cleverly along the bar.

He stared and stared at the boy in with the guards. But the little adventurer ignored him.

"Go to the end of the bar, Mr. Ashley, and I'll buy you a drink," Joe said quietly. And, as the wondering deputy obeyed, he strolled up to the glaring bartender.

"Drink for Mr. Ashley—and serve it in this glass!" commanded Rover Joe, holding out his hand. He whipped out a glass and plunked it down under the barkeeper's nose. Then he jabbed a gun into the same place as the fellow gaped and turned livid.

"Go on! Fill it—and slide it along!" insisted Rover Joe. The barkeeper gulped the law level grey eyes boring into his.

A filled glass went twirling along the counter, right to Deputy-sheriff Ashley's hand.

"Now, Mr. Ashley, drink up!" invited Rover Joe, but the deputy did not. Instead, he stared at the glass with bulging eyes.

Then, uttering a great shout, Ashley gripped the handle on the floor and held up the empty glass for all the guards to see. On the bottom of it was pasted a small round piece of paper.

And at that paper was written: "I am the Phantom's spy."

Yeah, Barkeeper George is the last of the Phantoms' grinning Rover Joe, keeping the flabby rogue covered. "George was the eyes and ears of the gang—and the messenger. For, you see, when I had a drink in here, I looked up the glass that was meant for Bull Snagsby. Pasted on the bottom, face up, was a bit of paper with the words 'Gold leaves Bank, 11:30, secret. Meet Deadwood Gulch.'"

"Prentiss is in it! But I read the message through the liquor in that glass, and acted accordingly!"

(Next Friday week's number brings you another smashing Rover Joe story.)

25-45

MAKING SURE!

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Old lady to deck-chair attendant: "Have you seen a small man in a bowler hat?"

Attendant: "I did see a bowler hat, mum, but I didn't look inside it."

A CAP-ITAL ANSWER!

There was one jaw shaking car on the floor. All over it at the shabby one. haying Snagsby, during that heard a gl still on the Thinking drunk, Joe



Rover Joe poured what was left in the glass on the bully-boy's face!

did not laugh. Under cover of the confusion, the livid man stealthily beckoned a lit-eyed Mexican to his side.

Go after that coyote stranger—and get him!" he snarled in a whisper. "You may know nothing, or he may know too much! So we'll play safe, Leon! Follow him, and finish him for sure! Then big him off where he won't be found—and stay away from me to kill any suspicions!"

Caught in Ambush!

AND later that night other deeds were wrought in Deepdown.

From an alley beside the Deepdown Bank issued a deputy-sheriff, trying a last wheedling strategy. There was a fine fast horse between the shafts—and there were sealed bags containing 30,000 dollars' worth of raw gold stowed under the deputy's feet.

Other men rode with him, a strong, well-armed guard. It was a great shipload of gold that was smuggled out of Deepdown that night in utter secrecy, so as to escape the clutches of the Phantom Gang.

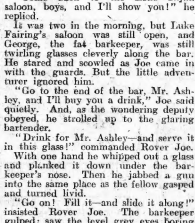
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## Our Three-Column Comedy!

## STRANDED!

## A Day Off.

TWO young fellows, Jimmy Biegle and Wally Wooster, were standing at a street corner chatting, having just by accident.

"Are you doing anything to-morrow, Wally?" asked Jimmy after a while.

"If not, what about running down to the seaside with me?"

Jimmy's optics lit up at the suggestion, but he shook his head.

"There's nothing I should like better," he said. "But I'm due at the office to-morrow, as usual."

"But couldn't you wangle the day off?" cooed Jimmy. "I've got to run down to Beachsea on business, and it would be company for me besides making a day out for you."

Still Wally shook his head.

"It sounds very tempting, Jimmy," he replied. "But I can't possibly get to-morrow off. It would mean going to the office for a start, and then I'd have to tell the boss a pretty fine tale."

"There's no need to do that at all," retorted Jimmy. "Just drop a note to your guv'nor to-night, saying you're not feeling at all well, and you'll be spending to-morrow in bed. Tell him you've got a bad cold with a temperature."

"Hmph! That's an idea!" said Wally, who was very keen on accepting his friend's offer of a trip to the briny if it could possibly be managed. "I'll try it, anyway."

"Good boy!" gurgled Jimmy. "Write that letter and post it to-night, and I'll see you in the morning. I'll pick you up at the end of my road at nine o'clock sharp."

"That's okay by me!" warbled Wally. "Thanks very much for the invite and the suggestion, old man. I'll be there to-morrow at nine."

Shortly afterwards the pair parted, and as soon as he arrived home, Wally wrote a letter to Mr. Jigson, his guv'nor, making out that he was feeling very queer all of a sudden and would spend the following day in bed.

"And that's that!" he gurgled, having dropped the letter in the nearest pillar-box. "Now roll on to-morrow, and let's hope it keeps fine for us!"

Next morning Wally was on his way to the office, feeling as well as ever.

He reached the front and floundered discommodately into a corner of a public shelter. There he tried to decide what best to do in the awful circumstances.

"No good phoning the boss, asking him to wire me the money for my return ticket!" he moaned. "That would put the fat in the fire. Jimmy's out for the day, too, goodness knows where, so



Wally's hat shot right off his head with shock.

now, I wonder how he'll take it? I expect he'll swallow it all right."

Beachsea was reached, and Wally walked out into the sunlit seaside town. It was a lovely summer day, and he was looking forward to enjoying every minute of it.

"I'll sit on the sands for an hour and work up an appetite for lunch," he decided.

So a little later found Wally lying on his beach, watching the waves breaking a few feet away, and tilting his straw hat forward to keep the sun out of his eyes.

The breeze was blowing from the direction of the gasworks, which rather spoilt the smell of the ozone. However, Wally did not worry about a little thing like that.

"Well, I suppose I'd better go and see about some lunch," he said at last, getting up to his feet.

He made for the promenade, but the post holes there were far beyond his means. So he went down side streets in the hope of finding a feedery that was cheap and cheerful.

He saw several, but they were all crowded, with long waiting outside for Wally wasn't the only visitor in the town by a long way.

"This isn't too funny!" he mumbled after a while. "I'm getting tired walking around, and hungrier than ever."

At last he found a sandwich shop, and he went in and ordered some, intending to eat them on the beach.

He was sitting on the beach, waiting for his sandwiches, when he saw a man in a suit and hat walking towards him.

"What's that?" he asked, looking up at the man.

"That's my hat," said the man, holding up a hat that looked exactly like Wally's.

"How do you know it's yours?" asked Wally.

"I found it on the beach," said the man, "and I thought I'd bring it back to you."

"Thank you very much," said Wally, "but I don't think I lost my hat."

"I'm sure you did," said the man, "because I saw it flying through the air when you were sitting on the beach."

"That's impossible," said Wally, "because I haven't been sitting on the beach since I got up to go to the office."

"That's what I told you," said the man, "and I'm sure you lost it."

"I don't believe you," said Wally, "because I haven't been sitting on the beach since I got up to go to the office."

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I can't get in touch with him. And I haven't the price of a telephone call on me in any case. What am I to do?"

Wally back home?"

The mere thought of such a thing sent a cold shiver down his spine as though someone had tipped a basin of jellied eels down the back of his neck. His pleasant day out seemed to have come to a very abrupt end.

For a long time Wally sat there in the depths of gloom and despair. He scanned the face of everybody who passed, but they were all strangers to him. There was nobody to whom he could apply for assistance.

"Oh, well, if I'm going to walk back home, I suppose I'd better start now!" he said at last with a long-drawn sigh that sounded like the "All Clear" backwards.

He got up and walked away, hardly realising where he was going. He gave a violent start on being suddenly addressed.

"Say, mate, do us a favour!" said a voice, and Wally saw that the speaker was a funny-faced little man, standing beside a portable harmonium.

"I want to go and get a cup of tea," he went on. "I might be away for an hour or more. Would you mind keeping an eye on the old harmonium, to save my saying it home with me?"

"Give you a couple of bob when I come back," said the man.

"Right-ho!" replied Wally readily, his peepers brightening up.

So the street musician, for such he was, shuffled away, leaving Wally guarding the harmonium and with the prospect of having two shillings in his possession before long.

"That's a start, and better than nothing," he muttered. "If only I could add to it and make up my fare back, or most of it, at any rate. Ah, an idea! I'm a bit of a musician myself. What about knocking a few tunes out of the old harmo and trying to earn a bit with 'em?"

Without loss of time, Wally set about his sudden inspiration, and began playing the harmonium. Numerous passers-

by dropped him a copper or two, and his spirits began to rise rapidly as the tedious slow movements passed.

"Oh, boy!" he chorled presently. "Three-and-fourpence already! I hope the chap who owns this harmonium doesn't come back in a hurry."

But there came a lull after that, and for some time nothing passed. Wally stopped playing, not wishing to use his energy, until suddenly he saw a stouthead gentleman coming along.

Instantly Wally crushed out a rollicking tune, fixed his eyes on the coming figure and hoping to get a contribution. But all suddenly the music ceased abruptly, and Wally's hat shot right up off his head with shock.

For he recognised the approaching gentleman as none other than Mr. Jigson, his boss.

"My giddy aunt!" gasped Wally, nearly falling off his perch. "If he sees me and recognises me, he'll mean the sack for a cert. Out of this for me!"

With that, he darted off and left the harmonium to look after itself. With the speed of a stream-lined sticktail, he tore towards the beach and down on to the sands.

Pulling up at last, he flopped down, with fast-beating heart, very much out of breath. And then, as he looked back at the man, he saw that the man gave him a bigger shock still.

It was a wall, lying on the shingle, almost covered. And he saw that it was his own missing one!

"Of all the luck!" he howled, looking down. "This is the spot where I sat down when I first arrived. The wallet must have slipped out of my pocket then. And the money and return half are just up there!"

He did not worry about returning to the harmonium to collect his promised two shillings. Instead, he made up for lost time till it was time to go home.

"Well, it didn't turn out so badly, after all!" he tootled in the train. "But no more days off for me!"

(Another jolly rib-tickler in next Friday week's number.) 25-8-35

THE THREE MUSTARDES DISCLOSE THE ENEMY'S HAND

THE MUSTARDES chose a table in the little tea cottage the gentle old lady in charge persuaded them to leave to-morrow. Two minutes later she led two Army captains to the table the Mustarders had left!

One of them said to the other: "I've been waiting for you. But it was fixed! Seeing this, Jim tried to get out of their table. It came up in his hand! Strange."

"What?" said the other. "We were sent from that table. We were led by a man who was looking staggard, and, in silence, he explained to me. We important one could see. But now I know I had Roger."

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"Of all the luck!" he howled, looking down. "This is the spot where I sat down when I first arrived. The wallet must have slipped out of my pocket then. And the money and return half are just up there!"

He did not worry about returning to the harmonium to collect his promised two shillings. Instead, he made up for lost time till it was time to go home.

"Well, it didn't turn out so badly, after all!" he tootled in the train. "But no more days off for me!"

(Another jolly rib-tickler in next Friday week's number.) 25-8-35

THE THREE MUSTARDES DISCLOSE THE ENEMY'S HAND

THE MUSTARDES chose a table in the little tea cottage the gentle old lady in charge persuaded them to leave to-morrow. Two minutes later she led two Army captains to the table the Mustarders had left!

One of them said to the other: "I've been waiting for you. But it was fixed! Seeing this, Jim tried to get out of their table. It came up in his hand! Strange."

"What?" said the other. "We were sent from that table. We were led by a man who was looking staggard, and, in silence, he explained to me. We important one could see. But now I know I had Roger."

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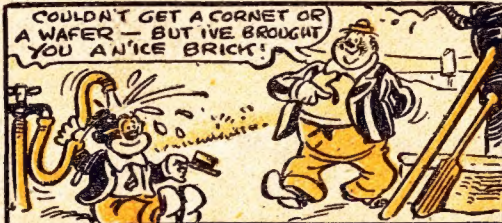


# PINHEAD and PETE

## PETE CATCHES HIS CHUM BENDING!



1. Pete rather enjoyed his stay-at-home holiday until Pinhead planned a picnic up the river. Then as he had all their gear dumped on to him, he found it too much like hard work, so he started to snoop.



2. "Ooops! Cheer up, coon, and I'll treat you to a s' nice ice," grinned Pinhead, as he went in search of one. But as ice cream cornets and wafers were barred, he brought back an 'ice brick' for his chum.



3. Of course, by this time the coon was all hot and bothered and in no mood for cheap jokes. "Gr-r-r! Take dat back! I s' no ostrich!" growled Pete as he let fly with the hard-baked builder's brick.



4. Yes, it sizzled past the big boy's hair parting and busted up their punt pole. "Now look what you have done!" purred Pinhead. "You'd better patch up that pole at once if not sooner, while I carry on!"



5. So off to the punt he went and stowed their picnic hamper aboard. It was then that Pete saw a handy length of rubber hose and helped himself to a chunk. And with that he joined the pole together.



6. "How's dat for a neat repair job?" he cried on rejoining his chum. "Ta, muchly! That's all we're waiting for!" said Pinhead, snatching the pole away. Then Pete saw Pamela was in the punt.



7. "Hey, what's de game? Where do I come in?" gasped the astonished coon. "Ha, ha! You don't!" chuckled Pinhead, prodding the bank with the pole. "You can jolly well push off now, coon!"

8. But there's many a slip twixt the punt and the picnic, as Pinhead very soon discovered. That punt pole was not strong enough to stand his weight, and it let him down badly. So Pete came out on top.

9. "That difficulty!" "Now you Pamela and"

